

### **REMARKS**

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted supplemental to the Petition to Make Special filed concurrently herewith. In view of the above amendments and the pre-examination search report, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due consideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

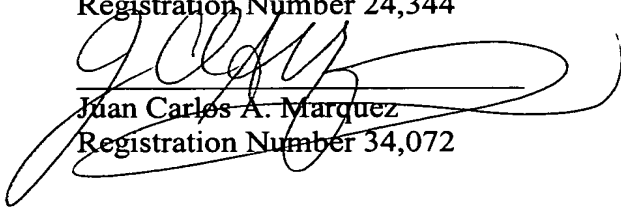
Claims 1-2 and 4-14 are under consideration by the Examiner in this application. Claim 3 is being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 13-14 are being amended, as set forth above, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this preliminary amendment.

In view of the above, the applicant submits that the application with the claims as amended above is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully contend that the differences recited in the claims are more than sufficient to support that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious in view of the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable consideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stanley P. Fisher  
Registration Number 24,344

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Juan Carlos A. Marquez  
Registration Number 34,072

**REED SMITH LLP**  
3110 Fairview Park Drive  
Suite 1400  
Falls Church, Virginia 22042  
(703) 641-4200  
**December 8, 2004**  
SPF/JCM/JT